

May 2026

Salem's



Good Newsletter



## Pastor's Corner

Below you will find a list of gospel-based resources. Here you will find something for everyone that will provide encouragement throughout the week. There are multiple podcasts, blog articles, and videos, all pointing you to the promise of Christ for you.

- [Lutherhouseofstudy.org](http://Lutherhouseofstudy.org)
- [1517.org](http://1517.org)
- [pastormarkanderson.org](http://pastormarkanderson.org)
- [Mbird.com](http://Mbird.com)

Check them out while commuting, working around the house, or if you're looking for something different to scroll through instead of the same old thing.

Imagine wearing a coat that cannot be cleaned. No matter how hard you scrub, the stains only spread. You learn to live with it—hide it, excuse it, pretend it isn't as bad as it is.

Then Christ comes and does something unexpected. He takes your coat off your shoulders and puts it on Himself. And He gives you His. Not a cleaned-up version of yours—but His own spotless righteousness. You stand there, not improved, not fixed, but completely clothed in something that was never yours to begin with.

For Luther the root cause of sin is unbelief, trusting in one's self, versus trusting our Maker, God for all things in life. From that root of unbelief flows out of us unrighteousness and ungodliness expressed in all of our desires for pleasure, control, and righteousness in ourselves.

Jesus Christ born of a virgin became fully man, and being conceived by the Holy Spirit is fully God. He was born into this world knowing no sin. The God of this world, through whom all things were created, clothed Himself in flesh, taking on the form of a servant for the purpose of destroying our enemies of sin, death, hell, and the grave by giving His life on the cross. In this life we may suffer and be afflicted by these things perpetrated upon us, and unfortunately what we perpetrate upon others, but they no longer have the final word.

Paul tells us that Christ was born under the law, subjecting Himself to the very state that we as humanity are born under. Paul also tells us in Romans 1 that the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Jesus, as much as He is fully God, took on flesh and subject Himself to everything it means to be human. Furthermore, Paul tells us in Galatians 3 that Christ became a curse for us by hanging on a tree, for it is written "cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree."

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, the Son in whom He said He was well pleased. God gave His Son Jesus to hang on a tree and take our sin, to take our unbelief upon Himself. We can see this in the words that Christ said while hanging on a tree for us, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me." Christ here confesses doubt, unbelief, in the words the Father had spoken over Him and takes sin upon Himself. Here Jesus takes on our sin, our unbelief. Jesus takes on the law and the consequence of the law which is death, and defeats it.

Jesus Christ defeated these by becoming sin for us, and now through our baptism

Christ has clothed us in His righteousness and takes our sin from us, upon Himself and swallows it up. What Luther refers to as the glorious exchange. Because of Christ's death and resurrection, all of your sin is forgiven and you now live in the freedom and peace of Christ, knowing He reigns for eternity, for you!

God's peace be with you,  
Pastor Larry Wright

**Church App**

Download the  
**TITHE.LY**  
Church App

Then, search for  
Salem Lutheran Church



Google Play    App Store



Check out our website at  
[www.salemlutheranponca.org](http://www.salemlutheranponca.org)



Find us on Facebook /  
Salem Lutheran Church



**Communion:** will be on Sunday, May 3rd, 2026 at 10:30am and Sunday, May 19th, 2026 at 9:30am  
(Communion will be on the first and third Sunday's of the month)

**“Coffee Hour” Fellowship:** will be on Sunday, May 10th, 2026  
(“Coffee Hour” Fellowship is on the second Sunday of the month, following our Worship Service. Coffee will be provided, but treats will not. If you wish to provide treats, there will be a sign-up sheet on the welcome desk to do so.)

**Bible Study:** is every Thursday at 9:30am. All are Welcome!

**Men’s Breakfast on Saturday, May 30th, 2026** at 8:30am—come and enjoy breakfast and fellowship!

**Gifts & Offerings through 4/26/2026**

- General: \$10,913.00  
YTD: \$52,874.25  
2026 Budget: \$219,954.00
- Mission Share/World Hunger: \$979.00  
(2026 Budgeted Line Item #5780 for \$18,000.00)  
Mission Share: \$550.50  
World Hunger: \$428.50  
YTD: \$3,750.00

**Total: \$11,892.00**

*\*Please note: these totals are before online giving fees have been assessed and are specific to the only two above noted budgeted line items (General and Mission Share/World Hunger—it does not include Lent/Christmas offerings that also go towards Mission Share)*

What a beautiful and busy season we have shared!

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Holy Week services so meaningful. From preparation to participation, your time, talents, music, and willingness made all the difference.

We also celebrate with joy our children who received their First Holy Communion (Garrison Evans & Ivy Taylor), those who took part in our 6th Grade Mentorship Program (Wayde Duerksen/Todd Book, Ethan Schweers/Brian Burrell, and Jase Uthof/Pastor Larry), and our newly confirmed (Saylor Schweers and Jett Taylor).

Congratulations to each of you on these special milestones in your faith journey!

A special thank you as well to all who helped with the Confirmation reception and provided gifts. Your kindness and generosity made the celebration even more memorable for our confirmands and their families.

We are truly grateful for our wonderful church family!



**THANK YOU**

**FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

*Salem Lutheran Church,*

*Thank you for participating in our Lenten Tree Fundraiser. This year was a success with people like you helping to support our mission.*

*Claudye H*

*No kid sleeps on the floor in our town!  
Core Team Volunteer.*

**WORSHIP SERVICE  
TIME CHANGE**

**Beginning on Sunday,  
May 10th our  
Worship Service time  
will be @ 9:30am**





**My Faith Statement  
By Saylor Schweers**

My name is Saylor Schweers. I was baptized in the summer of 2014 when I was two. My Bible verse is Isaiah 41:10, "So do not fear, for I am with you." I chose this verse because it reminds me that I should not fear anything because I have God with me. I used this verse when I found out my brother was going into the Marines. I thought of this verse and knew that God would be with him the whole time. This made me feel a lot better and less fearful about what could happen in the military.

Jesus Christ to me is the person who died for our sins and saved everyone. He gave up his life for all of us to be forgiven. We were forgiven from everything that we did. All the bad things. All the things we regret. Every single thing. Jesus is also the person who will never stop loving and forgiving.

I interact with God in many ways. One way is sports. When I play volleyball I pray for everyone to be safe and not get hurt. Even when I'm not the one playing, I feel that He is protecting me and my teammates. I also pray before bed. I always pray for a healthy family and for anyone I know who is sick to get better.

When my faith brought me comfort was when I was having a bad day. I just took a moment and went to pray. I would just turn to God and He made me feel a lot better. He brings me a lot of comfort because I know He is always with me and everything will be alright.

I continue to keep my faith up by continuing to go to church. I will try and get to church every Sunday. I would also keep praying. I would also like to study the Bible more and stay more faithful to God and turn to Him when I need anything or just comfort. I also plan to create a bigger relationship with God as well. Thank you for listening to my faith statement.

### My Faith Statement

By Jett Taylor

I'm Jett Taylor and I was blessed to be baptized on February 26, 2012. My favorite bible verse is Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". This is my favorite verse because it gives me confidence and hope. It gives me confidence and hope because it means Christ is within me and He will give me strength when I need it.

Jesus Christ to me is a friend and a protector. He is a friend to me because He's someone I can always talk to, and He is there if I ever need something. He is a protector for me because he is always watching over me, and keeping me safe.

I interact with God through prayer. The times I pray are during church and when I'm scared or worried and I need God's guidance. I also interact with God when I'm hunting, either sitting out in the duck blind or deer stand. During this time I can feel He is with me when I'm surrounded by all of God's beauty and creatures.

Right now, I intend to do God's work by being kind and a good friend in school. I will also continue to help with the orphan grain train. In the future I intend to do God's work by going to church and being involved in the church youth group. I will also do God's work by helping others and showing compassion to those that need it.

A time in my life when my faith brought me comfort was last year when I got hurt during track. My faith brought me comfort because I knew that my injury was going to get better if I prayed and asked God to help me. This was a humbling experience because I had to sit out and watch my teammates race without me.

I plan to continue building my faith by going to church on Sundays and being intentional about reading my Bible or doing Bible studies. I will also pray daily and thank God for all that I have and making me the Christian I am.

# FLOURISH

## A WOMEN'S FAITH GATHERING

saalem lutheran church  
presents:



**Rhonda Madge**  
Author of *Hindsight*



DATE  
31 May 2026



TIME  
2:00 PM



LOCATION  
103 EAST 2<sup>ND</sup> ST.  
PONCA, NE



Following her message, please stay for refreshments and fellowship. This is a wonderful time to be encouraged and connect with others.

Feel free to invite any sister in Christ to attend this meaningful gathering.

We look forward to seeing you there!

**Rhonda Madge** loves sharing her testimony as a speaker and author. In recent years, God has placed her in women's prisons where she delivers a message of forgiveness. She is driven to help others find who their identity is in Christ Jesus. She has been married to her husband Troy, for 36 years; they have four children and four grandchildren. They are owners of Advanced Window Coverings; a fourth-generation window coverings business. Rhonda serves on the board for Eternal Heiress Ministries, as well as The Fitness Angel TV. She was recently honored as a Woman of Distinction for She Leads Tennessee.

Contact: Koni Lamprecht or Julie Sydow for more information .

**Salem Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes**

**April 8th, 2026**

**Attendance:**

Salem Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, April 8th, 2026, at 7:00pm. Those in attendance included: Koni Lamprecht, Kenton Book, Cindy Purucker, Katie Uthof, Pastor Larry Wright, Mark Bauman, Kevin Dohma, Sarah Hamilton, Morgan Nelson, and Rick Schweers.

**Call to Order/Devotions/Approve last month's meeting minutes:**

Co-President Koni called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and Kevin led everyone in devotion.

Mark made a motion to approve last month's meeting minutes with the following revision that we met on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026, and was seconded by Mark. MCU.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Saumbra was not in attendance at the meeting, but she provided everyone with a copy of March's financial reports. Katie noted the following as per Saumbra's email:

The dollars for Pastor Larry's retirement were transferred this month. Hopefully this will continue.

I haven't received the Thrivent quarterly report, so I plan to have updated numbers on next month's report.

I haven't yet had to transfer funds from savings but will do so when it becomes necessary.

**There was not any Correspondence.**

**Pastor's Report:**

*Baptisms:*

Pastor noted that he met with Chet and Sadie and they decided on 5/25/26 for the baptism, but Scott just told Pastor that is also our Memorial Day service out at the cemetery, and he expressed that Chet/Sadie know this and they are okay with the baptism taking place at the cemetery. After discussion it was determined that Pastor would talk to Chet and Sadie again and confirm the details as the Church Council is also okay with this.

*Confirmation:*

*First Communion:*

*Funerals:*

*Membership:*

*Visits:*

*Weddings:*

*Misc:*

Pastor will be gone May 1-9<sup>th</sup> and Terrill or Sarah plan to cover Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, worship service.

**Old Business:**

Communication Options

Katie and Pastor are still working on this with Tithe.ly.

Katie checked with Tithe.ly our current church management program and they do offer a free option. Katie has set-up a test account with her and Pastor's cell numbers and as of currently their numbers have not been "fully approved". Once we've registered cell numbers, they enter a "pending approval" phase.

Transitioning from this phase to the “fully approved” phase now takes approximately 3 weeks due to new regulatory changes.

**Property Items:**

Still working on the automatic lights in the narthex

Estimate from Plumbing Pros of \$1,423.75

Disconnect/remove existing parsonage kitchen sink and faucet

Supply and install Blanco Truffle kitchen sink – hook-up and drain

Supply and install SS Blanco sink strainers

Re-install kitchen faucet

Remove exiting cry room bar sink faucet

Supply and install new chrome faucet in the cry room

A motion was made by Rick to approve the estimate from Plumbing Pros and was seconded by Sarah. MCU.

**New Business:**

**Important Calendar Dates:**

Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>:

Confirmation Reception by Thrivent @ 9:30am (Michelle sent us all invites)

6<sup>th</sup> grade cross presentation during our worship service

Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>:

Last day of Sunday School

Confirmation during our worship service

Pastor noted a potential scheduling conflict. After considering alternative options and acknowledging that the Confirmation date had been communicated well in advance, the Church Council determined to keep the date as scheduled.

Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>:

Senior Graduate Reception by Church Council @ 9:30am

Katie has already mailed the invites (Jaeden Huges, Mia Krusemark, BrieAnn Mellick, Caden Mercial, and Nolan Schweers)

Food/Drinks

Punch: Koni ice cream and Sarah 7-up

Mints: Rick

Nuts: Mark

Rolls: Katie will ask Karen and the church will reimburse her

Fruit: Strawberries – Kenton, Bananas – Kevin, Grapes – Cindy, Pineapple – Morgan

Decorations

Katie will check and see if more need to be purchased and purchase if needed.

Co-Council Presidents speech to the senior class

Salem Lutheran Church Women present them with a gift

Blanket presentation during our worship service (Karen is making the blankets)

Worship Service time changes on Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, to 9:30am.

Coffee Hour fellowship will move to following the worship service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month.

Church Council will meet following the worship service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month.

**There were no Additions to the Agenda.**

**Ministry Team Reports:**

Budget and Finance:

Chairperson: Mark Bauman

Council Liaison: Kenton Book & Koni Lamprecht (Always the Co-Church Council Pres.)

Report: Mark reported that they will be meeting sometime for the audit.

~~CALL Committee: N/A — this team is not being utilized currently.~~

~~(Ministry Site Profile)~~

~~Chairperson: Koni Lamprecht~~

~~(Constitution Committee):~~

~~Cindy Anderson, Todd Anderson, and Michelle Rinas are on this committee~~

Cemetery:

Chairperson: Julie Sydow

Council Liaison: Kevin Dohma

Report:

Communication:

Chairperson: Barry Krusemark

Council Liaison: Katie Uthof

Report:

Endowment:

Chairperson: Brian Burrell

Council Liaison: Duane Boyle

Report:

Faith Formation:

Co-Chairperson: Saumbra Hall and Michelle Rinas

Council Liaison: Cindy Purucker

Report:

Memorial:

Chairperson: Saumbra Hall

Council Liaison: Sarah Hamilton

Report:

Mission Support:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas

Council Liaison: Cindy Purucker

Report:

Music & Worship:

Co-Chairperson: Bruce Ericksen and Diane Smith

Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht

Report: Pastor reported that they met tonight and continue to meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 4:45pm.

~~Mutual Ministry: N/A — this team is not being utilized currently~~

~~Chairperson: Rick Schweers~~

Property:

Chairperson: Doug Bauman

Council Liaison: Mark Bauman

Report:

Automatic lights in the Narthex

Landscaping at the church

The bushes have been removed and Patti and Julie plan to work on the landscaping

Parsonage: dishwasher and water heater have been replaced.

Women's Restroom: Sarah reported that Mike is not able to do the project.

Bobier Construction was noted as a possible option.

Salem Mission Team:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas

Council Liaison: Morgan Nelson & Koni Lamprecht (as per their guidelines)

Report: Koni reported that they are also meeting right now.

Thrivent:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas

Council Liaison: Duane Boyle

Report:

~~Worship Leading Team: N/A—this team is not being utilized currently~~

~~Chairperson: Nicole Ericksen~~

Youth Group Ministry:

Co-Chairperson: Lisa Balvantin, Codi Hrouda, and Barry Krusemark

Council Liaison: Bronsan Schweers/Koni Lamprecht

Report: Koni noted that they went to a movie-The Passion of the Christ with local youth groups on Wednesday, Cindy noted that they did the mulching at the library, and Katie noted that they are going to Great Shots in Sioux Falls on Sunday and their last event will be their clean-up project on April 26<sup>th</sup> and they raised just over \$1,400.00 from the Easter breakfast.

**Announcements:**

The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, following our worship service. Kenton made a motion for adjournment, and it was seconded by Rick. MCU. The Church Council closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Uthof, Salem Lutheran Church Council Secretary

## May Worship Assistants

*(If you are unable to be a worship assistant, please find a replacement and email [salemonca@gmail.com](mailto:salemonca@gmail.com))*

**Council Person of the Month:** Sarah Hamilton

**Communion Assistants:** Sarah Hamilton and Mark Bauman

**Communion Set-up:** Lindsay Burrell

**Sunday Morning Set-up and Power Point:** Lisa Balvantin

**Ushers/Greeters:** Ron & Deb Mahler and Todd Anderson

**Scripture Reader:**

3rd: Lisa Balvantin

10th: Cindy Purucker

17th: Cindy Anderson

24th: Cheri Albrecht

31st: Jennifer Wright



# May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 No Sunday School Senior Graduate Reception @ 9:30am Worship Service (Communion) @ 10:30am, Senior Graduation Recognition during the service	4	5	6	7 Bible Study @ 9:30am	8	9
10 Mother's Day Worship Service @ 9:30am "Coffee Hour" Fellowship, following our Worship Service Church Council, following our Worship Service	11	12	13 Music & Worship @ 4:45pm	14 Bible Study @ 9:30am	15	16
17 Worship (Communion) @ 9:30am	18	19	20	21 Bible Study @ 9:30am	22	23
24 Memorial Day Worship Service @ 9:30am at the Salem Cemetery (if inclement weather it will be at the church)	25 	26	27 May Newsletter Item Deadline	28 Bible Study @ 9:30am	29	30 Men's Breakfast @ 8:30am
31 Worship @ 9:30am Mentorship Team meeting following our Worship Service Flourish a Women's Faith Gathering @ 2:00pm	1	2	3	4	5	6